



Testimony of Edward R. Schreiner Jr., R.Ph.

Raised Bill 5767, An Act Concerning Synchronizing Prescription Refills

February 5, 2013

Distinguished Members of the Joint Committee on Aging;

My name is Edward Schreiner Jr. As a registered pharmacist, I have owned and operated Stoll's Pharmacy in Waterbury, CT since 1988. I am also the Chairman of the Board of Directors for Northeast Pharmacy Service Corporation, a company that provides business development services to approximately 250 community pharmacies throughout New England.

I am submitting testimony in **support of Raised Bill 5767, An Act Concerning Synchronizing Prescription Refills**. "Refill Synchronization" is a concept in which all of a patient's prescriptions are coordinated to be refilled on the same day each month.

Why is this important? When you learn that you have a long-term health problem, one of the most important ways you can manage your condition is by taking your medicine as directed by your doctor, pharmacist, or other health care professional. This is also known as medication adherence. There are numerous reasons why people don't take their medications correctly. Many people never fill their prescriptions, or they may never pick up their filled prescriptions from the pharmacy. Other people bring their medication home, but don't follow their doctor's instructions – they skip doses or stop taking the medicine, or they take more than instructed or at the wrong time of day.

On October 11, 2009, the nonprofit health policy organization The New England Healthcare Institute (NEHI), released research showing that patients who do not take their medications as prescribed by their doctors cost the U.S. health care system an estimated \$290 BILLION in avoidable medical spending every year. NEHI's research found that one third to one half of all patients do not take their medications properly.

Pharmacists have long been aware that the most cost effective medication is the one that is taken properly. The concept of refill synchronization, developed in 1996 by a pharmacist in Long Beach, CA, seeks to improve medication adherence by reducing gaps in drug therapy and promoting monthly medication counseling. Greater medication adherence improves patient's



well-being and ultimately helps to drive down the costs of health care. In the ensuing years various programs such as Medicine-On-Time™ and Simplify My Meds™ have been developed to give pharmacists the ability to provide patient specific pharmacy service based upon refill synchronization.

Refill synchronization is an ongoing process. Initially quantities on existing prescriptions may need to be altered to allow all future refills to be due on the same day. Once the initial medication list is synchronized, all future prescriptions must be written for the same days' supply so that they are all refillable at the same time. Problems also arise when new medications are added or doses are changed mid-cycle and the new prescription is not written for the EXACT quantity needed to get the patient synchronized to the next fill cycle date.

Raised bill No 5767 protects patient's drug coverage by mandating that insurance companies cover prescriptions filled in a manner necessary to allow synchronizing of multiple prescriptions under a medication plan agreed upon by the patient, the doctor and the pharmacist. It supports pharmacists' ability to help control spiraling healthcare costs by assisting patients to manage their medication usage. Most importantly, this bill provides patient's more control of their pharmacy-related health care needs, specific to their personal situation, without the fear that their prescription drug insurance can deny coverage for an otherwise covered drug.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to support passage of Raised Bill No 6322. Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion.

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